

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: UR, CASC, CGEN (SANDBERG, JOEL AND ADELE)
SUBJ: INTERROGATION OF AMCITS IN USSR

REF: MOSCOW A-24 AND PREVIOUS

1. DURING JULY 24 CALL ON MFA CONSULAR ADMINISTRATION
OFFICIALS, G. A. BOSIKOV AND V.G. KOVALENKO, CONSOFFS
RECEIVED NOTE AND ORAL REPLY TO EMBASSY PROTEST
SUBMITTED JUNE 10 RE INTERROGATION AND EXPULSION FROM USSR
OF JOEL AND ADELE SANDBERG. COPY OF NOTE AND EMBASSY'S
TRANSLATION WILL BE POUCHED EUR/SOV REFERENCING THIS
MESSAGE.

2. BRIEFLY, NOTE ACCUSES SANDBERGS OF "ACTIVITIES IN-
COMPATIBLE WITH THEIR PRESENCE ON THE TERRITORY OF THE USSR
IN THE CAPACITY OF TOURISTS," WHICH RESULTED IN THEIR EXPULSION
FROM THE USSR. THE "ACTIVITIES," ACCORDING TO THE NOTE,
INCLUDED MEETING WITH SOVIET CITIZENS DENIED EXIT PERMISSION
TO EMIGRATE TO ISRAEL AND SLANDERING THE SOVIET UNION
DURING CONVERSATIONS WITH THEM, "PERSUADING" OTHER SOVIET
CITIZENS TO EMIGRATE, AND PRAISING THE WEST IN COMPARISON
WITH THE SOVIET UNION. NOTE ALLEGES "J. SANDBERG" CONFESSED
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TO MEMBERSHIP IN "MIAMI ZIONIST ORGANIZATION" CALLED

"YOUTH FEDERATION," AND TOLD INTERROGATORS HE HAD COME TO USSR "TO COLLECT INFORMATION ON SOVIET CITIZENS OF JEWISH NATIONALITY." THESE ACTIVITIES "AROUSED THE LAWFUL INDIGNATION" OF UNIDENTIFIED SOVIET CITIZENS WHO TURNED TO INTOURIST REQUESTING THEY BE "PROTECTED" FROM THE SANDBERGS. NOTE DENIES SANDBERG WERE REFUSED PERMISSION TELEPHONE EMBASSY AND ALLEGES INTOURIST EVEN HELPED THEM ORDER SUCH A CALL, ON WHICH GROUNDS MINISTRY "DECLINES" ("OTKLONYAYET") EMBASSY'S PROTEST OF VIOLATION CONSULAR CONVENTION ARTICLE 12. NOTE ALSO DENIES INTERROGATION WAS CONDUCTED IN UNSEEMLY MANNER AND STATES INTOURIST VOUCHERS AND COUPONS WERE "ANNULLED" BUT THAT NO OTHER OBJECTS WERE TAKEN FROM SANDBERGS. NOTE CLOSES WITH REQUEST THAT AMERICAN SIDE TAKE MEASURES TO PREVENT SUCH BEHAVIOR BY AMERICAN TOURISTS IN USSR IN FUTURE.

3. BOSIKOV'S ORAL PRESENTATION FOLLOWED IN GENERAL TERMS TEXT OF NOTE. HE OPENED BY SAYING HE WAS "DISAPPOINTED" EMBASSY WOULD "DEFEND SUCH PERSONS" AS THE SANDBERGS, AND EMBASSY POSTURE IN CASE WAS "HARMFUL" TO US-USSR RELATIONS. CONSOFF REPLIED HE UNDERSTOOD TOURISTS WERE FREE TO CONTACT SOVIET FRIENDS DURING TOURS, AND THAT PRIVATE EXCHANGE OF OPINIONS WAS NOT PROHIBITED. WHILE BOSIKOV AGREED THAT VISITING AND EXCHANGING VIEWS WITH FRIENDS WAS ALLOWED, HE SOMEWHAT HEATEDLY RETORTED THAT "ANTI-SOVIET SLANDER" WAS PROHIBITED, AND DWELT AT SOME LENGTH ON THE SOVIET EXPECTATION THAT TOURISTS WOULD SPEND TIME IN USSR SIGHTSEEING. CONSOFF REPLIED SANDBERGS HAD INDEED PARTICIPATED IN INTOURIST-ORGANIZED TOURS, AND REPEATED ASSERTION THAT PRIVATE EXCHANGE OF OPINIONS, AS OPPOSED TO PUBLIC STATEMENTS, WERE NOT PROHIBITED BY SOVIET LAW. BOSIKOV THEN TURNED TO ALLEGATION SANDBERG WAS MEMBER OF MIAMI "YOUTH FEDERATION," AND STATED HE HAD COME TO USSR "ON ASSIGNMENT" FROM THAT ORGANIZATION, WHICH WAS "INCOMPATIBLE" WITH TOURISM. CONSOFF REPLIED HE WAS UNAWARE SANDBERG BELONGED TO ANY ORGANIZATION, AND WAS UNCONVINCED SANDBERGS HAD VIOLATED ANY LAW.

4. DISCUSSION OF SUBJECT CLOSED WITH CONSOFF STATING HE FELT SUCH INCIDENTS WERE "UNNECESSARY" IN CONTEXT OF CONFIDENTIAL

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DEVELOPING US-USSR RELATIONS, AND URGING THEY BE AVOIDED IN FUTURE. BOSIKOV AGREED, BUT CONTINUED BLAME AMERICAN SIDE FOR INCIDENT, ASKING US WARN TOURISTS NOT TO ENGAGE IN ANTI-SOVIET ACTIVITIES WHILE IN USSR.

5. CONSOFF THANKED BOSIKOV FOR REPORT OF "INVESTIGATION" INTO INCIDENT, BUT DID NOT SPECIFY THAT CASE WAS CONSIDERED CLOSED.

PLEASE ADVISE IF FURHTER ACTION RE SANDBERG INCIDENT
IS ENVISIONED.
STOESSEL

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